



Office of Ecosystems and Communities Strategic Directions 2001 Fiscal Year Highlights

Community-based environmental protection places EPA staff in communities and ensures that environmental issues are addressed in a comprehensive way.

- EPA now has field presence in Eugene, Oregon, after successfully locating a place-based staffer in the community. Already, EPA has become a relevant player in local issues of significance.
- The Tillamook Bay National Estuary Program achieved significant progress on riparian fencing and restoration projects benefitting 175 acres. Seven new tide gates reopened fish access to 9 acres of important tidal slough habitat.
- Nearly 300 acres of wetlands in Klatt Bog, Anchorage, Alaska, have been preserved and restored, and plans for public access and educational facilities are now in place.
- A *Regional Guidebook for the Willamette Valley Ecoregion Wetlands* developed with EPA's help can now be used by the Oregon Division of State Lands and consultant groups to assess land use impacts to wetlands.

We involve communities in our work and encourage them to participate in our decisions.

- Watershed Funding Workshops in Idaho and Alaska provided direct, practical support to more than 100 local watershed council members looking for creative ways to finance watershed work.
- Launched a comprehensive public involvement program for the Columbia/Snake River TMDL, including a web page to allow the public to stay informed and provide input, individual meetings with public and interest groups, public workshops, and other efforts.
- Conducted Agricultural Burning Stakeholder Forums in Coeur d'Alene, ID, Pendleton, OR, Moscow, ID and Pasco, WA. The forums—a team effort with our state, tribal, and local partners—provided interested parties concerned about air pollution an opportunity to learn, share perspectives, and propose workable solutions.
- The Region has established solid frameworks for community involvement for two new major hazardous waste cleanups in Portland Harbor and the Duwamish River. Frameworks include cooperative relationships internally and with other agencies, community involvement plans, public involvement grant awards, and diverse outreach activities.
- With direct EPA support, public education on watershed planning in the Chico Basin in Kitsap County is underway. The effort includes open houses, a watershed academy, fact sheets, information kiosks, a website, a speakers bureau, a watershed tour, and more.
- Region 10 laid the groundwork for major cleanup in the Couer d'Alene River Basin, continuing an unprecedented level of community involvement in this huge, high profile, controversial project.
- A first-of-its-kind Listening Tour empowered Idaho communities to communicate face-to-face with regional senior managers, leading to better relationships and a more comprehensive understanding of local concerns.

Compliance & enforcement actions ensure environmental laws are followed.

- EPA conducted or reviewed nearly 100 inspections under FIFRA! Case reviews resulted in 4 civil complaints, 3 “Stop Sale, Use, or Removal Orders,” and 21 warning letters. An additional 26 warning letters were issued to first-time violators who did not file production reports. EPA also detained and denied 4 pesticide imports after reviewing more than 1,500 pesticide imports.
- EPA conducted 76 wetland inspections. Related enforcement actions preserved 60 acres of wetlands, restored 15 acres, and mitigated over 390 acres of wetlands. About \$70,000 in penalties were assessed for wetland violations this year.

Working with tribes supports our trust responsibilities and enhances our government-to-government relationships.

- EPA approved new Nonpoint Source Management Programs for the Quinalt and Swinomish Tribes. A total of \$557,000 was awarded to eight tribes in Region 10 to implement their programs.
- EPA provided a grant to the Nez Perce Tribe to complete a "Wetland and Riparian Evaluation Method" to inventory and characterize wetland functions and cultural values at a watershed scale.
- As a prelude to formal consultation on the Columbia River TMDL, EPA is working with the Columbia River Basin Tribes as part of an interagency steering committee.

Working with other agencies helps ensure wise decisions on environmental issues that affect all of us.

- Region 10 approved Idaho's nonpoint source management plan update, granting the state enhanced benefits status and authorizing them to receive extra funds. Region 10 approved Oregon's nonpoint source program, which now incorporates nine key performance measures.
- EPA worked with the state and aquaculture industry to implement the Snake River phosphorus TMDL, which reduces about 20% of the pollutant load into the river, curtailing nuisance plants and improving water clarity.
- EPA collaborated with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to implement the Northwest Forest Plan, to improve management practices on 24 million acres. Interagency teams, including EPA staff, have now completed watershed analysis of 90% of the land, laying the groundwork for restoration planning.
- Region 10 took actions to address loss of jurisdiction over isolated wetlands resulting from a supreme court decision. The region developed a strategy, conducted field visits with the Corps to verify isolated waters, participated at the national level to clarify areas of policy disagreement, and documented problematic cases.
- Participated as a cooperating agency in the development of NEPA documents for a variety of projects (eg, oil & gas development and siting of dredge disposal areas) to ensure that they will be more environmentally protective, and will be consistent with the law.
- Participated with other agencies to cooperatively manage the safe disposal of clean sediment from major dredging projects, including the Bellingham Bay Habitat Restoration Pilot and Puget Sound Siting Study.
- Worked with State Transportation Departments and others on agreements for balancing environmental goals with transportation objectives, and to provide for early integration of environmental issues into transportation project development.
- EPA was instrumental in integrating Clean Water Act requirements with the Endangered Species Act as part of the Agriculture/Fish/Water Comprehensive Irrigation District Management Plan.